



Inter City Railway Society

MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - 2016/17

held on Saturday 8th April 2017 at Crewe Arms Hotel

The meeting started at 15.00

Members Present:

Bruce Bayliss, Graham Bednall, David Benson, Brian Bentley, Tony Blackburn, David Blackburn, Peter Britcliffe, Ken Bull, Philip Carr, Robert Dalton, Neil Dix, Nigel Farebrother, Christine Field, Peter Flintham, Paul Forrest, Mark Hall, Martin Hall, Martin Harbord, Keith Hawken, Michael Hayman, Ben Hemming, Nick Hemming, Michael Hillier, James Holloway, Lee McCormick, Bill Moy, Jacob Moore, Stuart Moore, Simon Mutten, Alan Naylor, Gareth Oliver, Darren Pavitt, Rob Perry, Colin Pottle, Trevor Roots, Mike Rumens, David Stevens, Roger Thomas, Peter Turner, Albert Ward. Total 40.

Apologies for Absence:

Carl Watson.

Chairman's Report - Peter Britcliffe:

The role of Chairman was discussed to explain why Peter Britcliffe was in the Chair (see Amendments to Constitution). Peter welcomed all to the 2016/17 ICRS AGM reflecting it was good to see so many here and introduced the committee to the members present.

It's been a busy year which has included the departure of Carl and Louise Watson from the committee. Carl's workload at Eastleigh has increased significantly since he initially took on the role of chair and he decided last year that it was not possible to commit to the society the time the role required.

It was also announced that this is Stuart's last AGM before he begins a new chapter in his life / career to train as a vicar. It was suggested the society could have its own chaplain in the future!

Matters Arising from the 2015/16 Minutes:

The minutes for last year's AGM were read and there were no matters arising. Approval of the minutes were proposed by Simon Mutten and seconded by Darren Pavitt.

Treasurers Report - Peter Britcliffe:

Also see attached Accounts.

We made a surplus of £1,524.01 for the year 2016/17 which was smaller than in the previous year but it meant the society has now shown a profit for the past 3 years after showing deficits for the 2 years from 2012-14. I have included some of last year's figures in the right-hand column of the accounts so comparisons of the costs can be made.

The income from membership fees fell this year. We predicted this in last year's report because we had a large number of 5 year membership payments in 2015/16. So as a result of this, the membership fees we received did not cover the cost of producing and distributing **TRACKS**.

The production costs of **TRACKS** showed an increase but as in past years sales of publications covered this shortfall.

Sales have continued to do well but were slightly lower than the previous year but they continue to finance our events and attendance at railway shows and the running costs of the society. Our sales via the Ian Allan bookshops fell by almost £2,500 following the closure of their Manchester shop but we are hopeful we can increase sales through the two remaining shops in London and Birmingham this year.

Our assets currently total just under £13,000 not including our unsold stock.

Discussion: As of the 7th April 2017 our finances were approx: Treasurers Acc - £4500.00, Savings Acc - £6700.00, PayPal - £500.00 Total – £11,700.00 so we are in a healthy position.

Approval of Treasurer's Report was proposed by Albert Ward and seconded by Darren Pavitt.

Membership Report - Colin Pottle:

A very successful year, from April 2016 to the beginning of March 2017 saw us take on 157 new members. This comprised of 3 Five Year members, 16 **eMembers** and 138 **Standard** members.

The year also saw us lose 129 members, 4 of whom sadly died. The majority of members that didn't renew failed to respond to emails or phone calls, and were removed by myself. This highlights the importance of keeping your details up to date.

We currently have 1048 members of which 182 are five year members, reducing every month (see below), 65 **eMembers** and the rest **Standard** members.

I would like to remind everyone that an S.A.E. goes a long way to reducing costs to the society when renewing your membership.

Amendments to Membership Types:

The big news of 2016 was that we abandoned the five year membership category from October.

There were two main reasons for this. If, for whatever reason, we were unable to produce **TRACKS** any more, a lot of people would have felt cheated when not receiving something they had paid for. Also, the committee was uncomfortable holding these pre-paid membership subs.

Discussion: Colin reiterated the need for members to let him know when personal details change.

The question was asked about active members. Trevor replied that about 10% attend visits etc and 25% buy one or more books so the vast majority are 'armchair' enthusiasts who eagerly await the information provided in **TRACKS**.

Editors Report - Trevor Roots:

With the toll and cost of producing 12 issues a year it was decided that from the start of 2016/17 that only 10 issues pa would be produced. This allowed me a couple of months where the arduous monthly deadline did not have to be met. The months to be missed were the January and July issues. The first issue of 2017 was therefore a combined Jan/Feb. As it turned out the extra time was taken up with producing books and planning events following the resignation of Carl & Louise Watson at the end of 2016. It may well be that the release date is shifted to the middle of January 2018 to accommodate the compilation of books and so it is not such a big gap between issues. It is still undecided if the July issue will be reinstated as there is still more content than pages !!

To mitigate the loss of 128 pages pa, the regular info in **SOCIETY NOTICES** has been largely removed and is sent out with the new members Welcome Pack. To further help the regular feature **GLOUCESTERSHIRE & STIRLINGSHIRE SIGHTINGS** was stopped at the end of 2016. A big thank must go to Derek Sneddon and Nigel Hoskins who provided the data since the start in September 2009. These changes have gained an additional 5 or 6 pages per issue, so effectively getting back one of the missing months.

With the membership now hovering just below the 1050 mark we printed 1030 copies per month as of the end of February 2016. The extra quantity has pushed the printing unit cost down by 1p but this was countered by the postage increase in April 2016 of 1p per copy to 38p. It is likely to rise again during the year. The printing costs are as follows.

MONTH	Pgs	Qty	PRINTING	POSTAGE (Qty)		POLYWRAP (Qty)	TOTAL
				Members	Mem. Sec		
Feb 2016	64	1020	£1006.40	£358.16 (958)	£7.30 (26)	£127.60 (958)	£1499.46
Jan/Feb 17	64	1030	£1000.22	£373.54 (983)	£7.60 (33)	£119.67 (983)	£1501.03

Extrapolating from the Feb 2017 figures above the costs per issue per month for **Standard Members** are:

Printing	£0.98	Postage	£0.38	Polywrap	£0.14 (single sided)	TOTAL	£1.50
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Therefore to supply 10 issues of **TRACKS** per annum per **Standard Member** costs **£15.00**, a reduction of £3 from 2015/16. This means for the first time production of **TRACKS** is covered by the membership fee. If 11 issues are produced then we will still be in the black.

We continue to send copies of **TRACKS** to Ian Allan shops however in June 2016 the Manchester shop closed leaving just Birmingham and London Waterloo. However the latter shop requested an increase to 10 copies in December the same as Birmingham.

A useful database of all photos featured in **TRACKS** since December 2006 has been compiled by John Barton and Colin Pottle but still needs to be checked before it can be made available. However I am already finding it useful as it is now impossible to remember what has been illustrated previously.

Discussion: The amount of non UK pages in **TRACKS** was brought up by one member as too many but Trevor highlighted that those articles at least do not have to be written by him and if reduced would need to be replaced with articles written by others, which at present are not forthcoming. It was also made clear that many members enjoy seeing the diversity of traction in other countries even if they never leave the UK.

Publications Report - Trevor Roots:

Introduction:

With the resignation of Carl Watson at the end of 2016 all work on publications and producing books fell to myself. Having already been responsible for all the artwork and compilation of 5 other books, bar **Irish Railways** the task of compiling the **UK Combine** was also added. There was in fact little time to even contemplate trying to recruit new blood and with the trouble we have previously trying to find anyone else with the ability, time or conscientiousness it was far easier for myself to take on the extra workload. Maintaining the reputation of our books has to be paramount.

Book Sales: (* not published in 2016, USFs not included)

	Members	Non-Members	Trade (Ian Allan)	Direct (Shows)	Total Sold	Total Printed	Unit Cost
2015							
01 Pocket Book	194	103	240	85	622	775	£2.10
02A Combine	303	106	135	40	584	600	£4.69
02B Summer Combine	69	39	97	45	250	350	£5.14
03 Wagons	213	87	90	46	436	500	£3.26
04 Name Directory	54	11	30	10	105	n/a	
09 Irish Railways	10	7	8	10	35	n/a	
Totals	843	353	600	236	2032		
2016							
01 Pocket Book	205	133	160	73	571	650	£2.38
02A Combine	268	113	95	27	503	600	£6.03
02B Summer Combine	109	47	10	74	240	300	£5.16
03 Wagons	196	80	76	34	386	450	£3.15
04 Name Directory	3	8	0	2	13	n/a	
09 Irish Railways *	3	7	0	3	13	n/a	
Totals	788	388	341	213	1630		

Generally book sales have remained fairly constant from 2015 with the exception of Ian Allan sales, as in June 2016 the Manchester shop closed leaving just Birmingham and London Waterloo shops. For various reasons, the IA shops did not receive books at the optimum times in 2016 so by the time they received stock some months had lapsed affecting their ability to shift stock. In particular the shops did not receive many, if any Summer Combines. Happily the remaining two shops are willing to still take stock and it appears the initial signs are good for reasonable sales in 2017.

No books sold out in 2016 with excess stock remaining of all bar the Combine, as not all the 600 ordered were printed.

Printing, Postage & Distribution:

Up until the Summer 2016 Carl & Louise were responsible for posting out books but starting with the Summer Combine 2016, Minuteman (MM), our printers for A5 wire bound books took responsibility for distribution and MM is provided with regular lists (in address label ready format). This has continued with the 2017 Combine & Wagons. Their costs include extra for stuffing the envelopes but together with the trade postal discount, prices are slightly lower than doing it in house:

Postal Type	MM Postage + envelope	ICRS Postage + envelope
Large letter (1 book)	£1.58 (£1.23 + 0.35p)	£1.70 (£1.54 + 0.16p)
Small parcel (2-4 books)	£2.92 (£2.57 + 0.35p)	£3.01 (£2.85 + 0.16p)

As MM do not print the Pocket Book, this will be distributed directly.

Taking books or sundry items to my local Post Office appears much easier than was the experience with Carl and my PO actively wants the business. Therefore the franking machine has been dispensed with as it didn't save money and was a considerable hassle. However both myself and Chris took on the task of distributing

the books in conjunction with Minuteman but this is a daily time consuming task and ideally we would like to find someone who could take this on.

2017 Books:

Considering the frenetic situation at the end of 2016 with myself and the Editorship, to suddenly find I was going to have to do more work on the 2017 books was to be honest, not overly welcome. But I was determined our reputation for producing quality books was not to be threatened. I also took the opportunity to instigate a new section, Preserved ex-BR Coaches to be added into the Combine and Pocket Book. I believe this has been widely welcomed but involved re-formatting both books to fit in considering the additional pages the myriad of new EMUs have needed. Both books are now unique in the market.

Carl handed over his master spreadsheet in January 2017 which I used for compiling the Combine and PB. I am however instigating a change in that all books are to be kept as running publisher doc drafts as per the way I have been doing with the Wagon book in 2016. This means the books are effectively correct at any one point so can be produced quickly once the 'updated to...' date is agreed with just final formatting to be completed.

Previous sales were related to our year from 1st March to end of February which overlaps with how the books are actually produced. One of the proposed changes to the Constitution to be discussed at this AGM realigns our year with the calendar year. Therefore none of the 2017 books are included in the figs shown above. even though the Combine was released on the 27th January 2017. Sales have been strong for the Combine, up by 25% on 2016. We have already posted out more Combines by the end of March 2017 than we sold by the end of June in 2016. Sales of Combines to Ian Allan are also not far short of last year considering we lost the shop in Manchester, usually our biggest seller. The other 2 books are also ahead on sales in comparison to the same period in 2016 with the Wagon book 50% up. As of the 31st March we had posted out 693 books compared to 570 in 2016.

As stated last year we did not produce **Irish Railways** and this has been discontinued and does not appear on the website, though if anyone wishes to buy it we still have a small stock.

Last produced in late 2014, a new edition of the **Name Directory** is to be released in July along with the **Summer Combine**.

Sundries:

With a reduction below cost price, stocks of polo shirts have been reduced with a few Small White shirts left. We still have Navy shirts in four sizes, Small, Medium, Large & XL.

Binders have also sold steadily since reducing to £5 each, just above cost price of £4.21 so if postage is required we now make a loss on each one and is worse if ordered on PayPal. But with huge stocks left it will be several years before we sell them all. Providing binders can really be seen as a member service now as opposed to making any profit.

A useful addition to the sales stand our stock of printed pens sold out so we have ordered more as the new batch will be more cost effective at 50p ea, so just covering our costs. They are a good 'free' advert.

We have sufficient pocket book covers to last a few years as well

Proposed Changes to Role of Publications Manager:

The role is to be limited to just looking after the books with sundries passing to the new post of Sales Manager.

Discussion: Trevor explained that an error had been found in the Pocket Book only 3 days prior to the AGM and with a lot of effort a revised edition is to be printed updated to the 1st April. It should be due out by the end of April. All purchasers will receive free replacements if required, though a printed sheet is available of the missing numbers. All non-members with email were initially contacted and many have replied commenting on the good customer service they have received. Trevor considered it was only right to be up front with purchasers about the error and the honesty has been well received. Unfortunately any profit will be wiped off but at least our reputation will be maintained.

Website Report - Trevor Roots:

As with previous year, nothing much to report other than the website ticks over and is still generating new members and hopefully many book orders.

Gareth Patterson is doing an excellent job with Social Media, see his report below and these new advertising platforms are generating new members and book sales.

The TRACKS photo database will be put on the website when checked.

Social Media Report - Gareth Patterson:

Well 2016-17 has proved to be a successful one in the way of social networking because as from the 16th March this year we passed the 600 Likes / Followers mark on our Facebook page which is a massive leap in numbers from this time last year when we only had around half of that (we are now on 616 Followers as I write this)

Our Twitter page is steadily rising as well with 215 Followers but note this has not been running as long as the Facebook page.

It was agreed at last year's AGM that we would promote other Railway organisations such as heritage lines, Gala's etc when not promoting our own events and books. This has proved successful with new people joining our pages not to mention some positive feedback from some railways themselves in which they have also given us a mention on their pages.

One new feature that was added on the Facebook page this year is a button which is displayed under the main ICRS logo listed as "SIGN UP" so if anyone clicks on to this it automatically directs them straight through to the membership section on our official website so hopefully guide new members in the right direction.

The Twitter Page is directly linked to the Facebook page so when posting on one it automatically goes straight through to the other which is very handy when promoting the books etc.

Event Co-ordinators Report - Trevor Roots:

The first event was a guided tour of Eastleigh Works on the 5th March attended by 17 members.

On the 9th April our AGM at Locomotion, Shildon was attended by only 7 members other than officials. This was our poorest AGM attendance for years. Following the AGM we were given a guided tour of various iconic locos in the collection with exclusive access to cabs.

Our only Preservation Gala attendance of the year was to the Swanage Diesel Gala, our fourth year in succession, from the 5-8th May at which we were also sponsors for the second year running though this involved a £50 increase. We sold 72 books and enrolled 9 members over the four days.

Our annual bash at Eastleigh Works was held on the 4th June and was the best attended with 100 members. The day was slightly shorter as the Works was not available until 14.00 but cab rides in 3 locos proved popular again.

The DRS Open Day was held at Crewe Gresty Bridge Depot on the 23rd July and was one of the best that we have attended enrolling 13 members and selling 127 books. This event is always used to release our **Summer Combine** of which 76 flew off the stand.

The last event of the year was planned to be another guided tour of Eastleigh Works on the 24th September but due to poor bookings, it was cancelled.

All of the 2015-16 events were organised by Louise Watson to whom a vote of thanks must go, however she resigned at the end of 2016. Though an appeal was made for a replacement no-one came forward and hence I took over the reins.

A big programme of events has been planned for 2017 with our first visit to Long Marston.

The role of Events Co-ordinator is to split with Preservation Galas and Open Days coming under a Sales Manager, who will be responsible for the sales stand and visits to railway installations the domain of a Visits Organiser.

Discussion: It has been decided not to put on the hog roast at the up-coming Eastleigh event. It was originally planned to have the hog roast at the anniversary event only but has continued since. The hog roast costs a lot and the committee felt the cost can no longer be justified especially with the change in the starting time which reduces the overall visit time. It was suggested it would be far better that the food is made available before the visit at lunchtime as a number of people have to leave before the end of the event to catch trains etc. This was very well supported and it was agreed that this will be looked into further.

The Events co-ordinators post is to be split. There will be a role for someone to arrange visits and a role for someone to run the sales stand at events (see Amendments to Constitution).

A question was raised about reaching Long Marston from the nearest railway station. Simon is going to look at this in more detail. It may be possible for those with cars to help ferry those coming by train.

If people have any ideas of places to visit please contact the Visits Co-ordinator.

Amendments to the Constitution:

It is proposed to amend the constitution to reflect recent financial and operating procedures not previously covered including updating the criteria for the EGM to match that of the AGM.

We have a president who will be the contact for key issues so it is felt that we do not need a Chairman as well. Following the resignation of Carl Watson the role of Chairman has been filled as agreed by the officials who collectively are responsible for strategy.

It is proposed that the financial year will now run from the 1st January to the 31st December to better reflect that books and **TRACKS** are produced in the calendar year. Therefore this current financial year will run from 1st March 2017 to 31st December 2017. This change will also allow the AGM to be held earlier and therefore free up dates in late March / April so we can attend galas such as the NVR gala which is on this weekend.

It is also proposed to amend the post of Events Co-ordinator with two posts of Visits Co-ordinator and Sales Manager (for events).

Proposed: Martin Hall, Seconded: Mark Hall.

Election of Officials:

With the exception of Stuart Moore the following officials, Trevor Roots, Peter Britcliffe and Colin Pottle agreed to stand for a further year.

Election of the committee en block was proposed by Simon Mutten and seconded by Stuart Moore.

The post of Visits Co-ordinator was filled by Mark Hall and the post of Sales Manager was filled by Christine Field.

AOB:

None.

Presidents Closing Comments - Simon Mutten:

It's been a funny year. A lot has happened, Leicester won the Premiership, Trump became the president of the USA and Brexit was voted for.

As things change within the ICRS they also improve. The society is still developing and going from strength to strength. We as members owe a debt of gratitude to Trevor and to Chris for supporting him in his work for the society. Please thank the committee in the traditional fashion.

The meeting closed at 17.00